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LETTER DATED 8 AUGUST 1995 FROM THE ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit a letter from Mr. Andrey Kozyrev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, in connection with the latest events in Croatia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) V. SIDOROV
Ambassador, Acting Permanent
Representative of the Russian
Federation to the United Nations

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Annex

Letter dated 8 August 1995 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation addressed to the Secretary-General

I am addressing you in connection with the tragic turn of events in the past few days in and around Croatia. The massive offensive of the Croatian armed forces against the Serb-populated areas negates your appeals, as well as the efforts of the international mediators, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Carl Bildt, to continue the search for a political settlement.

Deplorably, the prevailing inclination in Zagreb has been to integrate the Serb-populated areas forcibly, and this has been indirectly encouraged from the capitals of a number of major States of the world.

We have before us a case in which the principles of a just settlement are being sacrificed to the philosophy of fait accompli. We believe that such an approach will have damaging consequences both for a solution of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and, on a broader level, for the role which the United Nations is called upon to perform in the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security.

In launching an offensive against Krajina, the Croatian side not only violated a considerable number of Security Council resolutions but also carried out a series of deliberate attacks on "blue helmets". We believe that those who undertook such actions or gave the orders to carry them out are personally responsible for the casualties sustained by the peace-keepers.

The lack of due reaction to such developments may well serve as additional grounds to accuse the United Nations of double standards. Deserving of the most serious consideration in this connection is the fact that the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation (UNCRO) Command did not request (or did not obtain?) air support from NATO in order to protect its personnel, at the very time when NATO aircraft requested by General Bernard Janvier were pounding Krajina Serb positions under Croatian attack.

Today, we are witnessing a humanitarian tragedy unprecedented since the beginning of the Yugoslav conflict. An exodus of over 150,000 people from the Serb Krajina has started, entailing enormous human suffering.

We expect that you will use your authority and capacities so that the United Nations can take all possible measures to protect the civilian population, which would include not only effective humanitarian assistance to the refugees but also political pressure on Croatia with the aim of ensuring that, as a State Member of the United Nations, it fully respect human rights.

In practical terms, what is also of key importance at the present stage is the continuation of the United Nations peace-keeping operation in Croatia in order to prevent a complete humanitarian catastrophe and ensure objective international monitoring of the actions of the Croatian authorities with respect to the Serbian population now under their control.

A. Kozyrev